

Jani Leinonen

ZETTERBERG GALLERY

Telakkakatu 6

March 14–May 3

In this exhibition, Finnish artist Jani Leinonen's recipe is as simple as it is effective. Two types of work are displayed: large text-based reliefs and smaller collages of colorful cereal packages. The former are based on the typographies of well-known logos, but their distinctive design identities are manipulated into spelling out common sayings or quotes from popular culture. In the latter, Leinonen replaces familiar international brand names with single words, which when several boxes are juxtaposed form sentences such as "The things you own end up owning you," in *The Things You Own*, 2014. The logos and packages are altered so seamlessly that the words and the product are conflated in the viewer's mind, presenting various levels of meaning simultaneously.

Leinonen's works represent pure Pop art in its contemporary form. They are smart, sexy, and vibrant, just as Pop was in the 1960s, but like many recent iterations of the genre they are political too. They criticize not only the values of Western consumer culture but also those of the art market. And, as rather handsome artworks themselves, they are inescapably a part of the system they question. Some of the artist's new works, such as *It's Not Over*, 2015, contain an additional layer of apparent irony, with grubby surfaces making them look like they have been forgotten outdoors for a few winters. Perhaps Leinonen is here admitting to art's unsuitability to the task of bringing about any real political change.



Jani Lenonen, *The Things You Own*, 2014, acrylic on product packages, 23 x 23 x 3".

— Timo Valjakka